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Revitalizing Hollywood Stardom:
Classical Star Power and Enduring Marketability at Warner Bros. in the Beginning of New
Hollywood

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in Film Studies

May 2020

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May 2020

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ABSTRACT

Revitalizing Hollywood Stardom:

Classical Star Power and Enduring Marketability at Warner Bros. in the Beginning of New Hollywood

by Tham Singpatanakul

New Hollywood was foundationally a debatable period in the course of American film history, with distinctive characteristics of new directorial emergence and innovative film style. However, the contemporary industrial context suggested a prominent power of stardom to effectively sustain the business in the new wave of new youth and counterculture. In the inception of the period, Warner Bros., one of the major film studios since the classical Hollywood era, exemplified a star-driven marketing approach using classical glamour and the narrative of nonconformity to attract the target audience. Proven by the studio's archival evidence, major Hollywood stars in the 1960s made extensive use of their established persona to reframe contemporary perception towards Hollywood stardom. Attributing star marketing power into New Hollywood studies not only complicates the traditional definition of New Hollywood, but also highlights its high cultural and commercial impacts on the Hollywood industry in the countercultural 1960s.

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Introduction

In the official trailer of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Nichols, 1966), a serious adult drama made during Jack Warner's final years at Warner Bros., several headshots and portraits of Elizabeth Taylor in her character of Martha are evidently seasoned with an aging makeup for a deglamorized look. Although her performance as a boozy and bitter wife managed to elevate her as a talented and versatile actress, the branded image of Taylor's "undisguisable beauty" from the Golden Age was never overlooked for the film's success.¹ Before the film's release, the Warner Bros. publicity team meticulously planned to "surprise" the curious public about her significant change from the image of an iconic grace to that of an unattractive middle-aged woman.² *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* was one of the first films to strategically integrate the well-established classical star discourse into film marketing materials. Following the 1966 film, Warner Bros., under the new branding of a recent merger Warner Bros.-Seven Arts, continuously redeveloped the classical star concept into contemporary star-driven promotion to maximize the public attention in emerging New Hollywood films, such as *Bonnie and Clyde* (Penn, 1967) and *Cool Hand Luke* (Rosenberg, 1967). The trailer of *Bonnie and Clyde* recaptures the "fashionable" Old Hollywood moment through the acting and the nostalgic costume of Warren Beatty and a newcomer with classical Hollywood beauty, Faye Dunaway.³ For the *Cool Hand Luke* trailer, Paul Newman organized his classical star allure to depict a character of unromantic anti-heroism, as "the man [...] that simply will not conform" to only the traditional definition of

¹ "Elizabeth Taylor Is Not Afraid of 'Virginia Woolf'," Box 7, folder 14677B, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Papers, WBA.

² "All for the Love of Mike," *The Saturday Evening Post*, 1965, Box 5, folder 1019, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Papers, Warner Bros. Archive (WBA hereafter).

³ Inter-Office Memo to Dick Lederer from Tom Buchanan, dated May 23, 1967, Box 1, folder 12998A, *Bonnie and Clyde* Papers, WBA.

American matinee idol.⁴ These film trailers were just the beginning of repurposing marketing power of classical stardom to sell Hollywood films for the new generation of viewers in the late 1960s. The shifts in moviegoing demand and public favor in countercultural sensibility at the turn of the 1960s led to the reconfiguration of New Hollywood star marketing by combining the approach of classical glamour and the popular narrative of nonconformity in star-driven film promotion.

Previous scholarship on Hollywood stardom has examined the economic value of the Hollywood stars in the Golden Age. Both Richard Dyer's *Stars* and Paul McDonald's *Hollywood Stardom* have complicated classical Hollywood stardom's stance in the commercial dimension because it is both "a guarantee [...] of profit" and "an experience" which consumers want to buy in the film.⁵ However, these foundational texts on the stardom economy do not explicitly mention the substantial contribution of star power during the transition to New Hollywood, the period heavily influenced by the emergence of innovative films and a new directorial generation. Due to the apparent scholarly neglect of the New Hollywood star system, this thesis serves to expand the discourse of Hollywood stardom to emphasize the importance of the existing Hollywood star entity through 1967, which Peter Biskind marked as the end of the Hollywood studio system.⁶ To prove the argument of the enduring star marketing power in the inception of

⁴ See "Cool Hand Luke (1967) - Official Trailer - Paul Newman, George Kennedy Movie HD," YouTube video, 2:48, official trailer of *Cool Hand Luke*, posted by "Movieclips Classic Trailers," July 3, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofxtDrRVQY4>

⁵ See Richard Dyer, *Stars* (London: British Film Institute, 1998), 11, and Paul McDonald, *Hollywood Stardom* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 16. Dyer sees Hollywood stars attached with a function of market manipulation which influences the general audience's interest in a film, while McDonald adds that the stars are not directly symbolic commodities but an important part that may lead the consumer to buy into the idea of the film.

⁶ See Peter Biskind, *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls: How the Sex-Drugs-and-Rock-'n'-Roll Generation Saved Hollywood* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999), 15. Biskind marks that in 1967 there were two innovative films *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Graduate* (Nichols, 1967) that tremendously affected the Hollywood business focus to the emergence of a new generation of directors. Unlike other great directors of the studio era perceived as a hired help to the studio entertainment machine, the newly discovered directors from this year developed their personal styles and artistic consciousness in their distinguished works of films.

New Hollywood, I utilize in this study a wide range of archival research, such as the Marty Weiser Papers housed at the Margaret Herrick Library, the Collections of Motion Picture Press Kits, Motion Picture Lobby Cards, and the Sales (Ephraim) Collection of Tapes and Transcripts of Interviews by Roy Newquist at the UCLA Performing Arts Special Collections, and the marketing and publicity records from archival studio collections at Warner Bros. Archive. I intend to make extensive use of these primary sources in order to explain how the infancy of New Hollywood stardom resorts to the classical star appeal for an integrated star marketing formula to generate the films' revenues and profits. From the archival evidence, New Hollywood star power does not diminish but continuously maintains commercial significance from the classical era to sell feature films on marketing materials and publicity documents. These archival references also illuminate the shift of how New Hollywood stardom combined and reinterpreted the classical Hollywood star quality for star-driven marketing strategies. The records present new integrated images and narratives inscribed on contemporary stars to draw the attention of new youth and counterculture, as presented in selected Warner Bros. films *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Nichols, 1966), *Bonnie and Clyde* (Penn, 1967) and *Cool Hand Luke* (Rosenberg, 1967).

Initial New Hollywood films made by former "Big Five" studio Warner Bros. exemplify the continuation of the classical star marketability in promotional strategies to maximize the financial performance of their movies. The studio had been historically dependent on star power in on- and off-screen exposure for commercial purposes.⁷ As Douglas Gomery observes in *The Hollywood Studio System: A History*, the studio's star-driven model for public attraction had been exposed and criticized since the Golden Age.⁸ To maximize the box office performance of

⁷ See Tino Balio, "Selling Stars: The Economic Imperative," in *The Classical Hollywood Reader* ed. Steve Neale, (New York: Routledge, 2012), 214. Balio presents that some of Warner Bros. contracted stars legally challenged the studio in one of the cases that the studio had exploited them as a mere investment on their full work capacity.

⁸ See Douglas Gomery, *The Hollywood Studio System: A History* (London: British Film Institute, 2005), 133.

their films, the studios utilized star power with the practice of typecasting in films and subsequently translated them into press materials. However, the studio's excessive demand of star exploitation brought notoriety to its system that, as Tino Balio notes, "treat[ed] a star as chattel, as a mere investment that could be milked for all he or she was worth."⁹ Warner Bros. in return received backlash from contracted stars in the 1930s and 1940s, for example, James Cagney, Bette Davis, and Olivia de Havilland, for their control over their image. From Cagney and Davis' legal battles to the California Supreme Court's 1944 *De Haviland* verdict on the studio's unfair suspension policies, Warner Bros. epitomized the studio whereby star autonomy was contentiously bargained for in the Golden Age of Hollywood.¹⁰ Despite the downsizing of stars under long-term contract after the vertical disintegration in the late 1940s, Warner Bros.'s 1960s films, influenced by the new wave of socially critical themes and new directorial generations, still relied heavily on the commercial power of classical stardom plus its granted privilege of self-branding. The studio took advantage of the new branded images of established classical film stars, namely Elizabeth Taylor in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and Paul Newman in *Cool Hand Luke*, as well as an interesting talent professionally launched in the early 1960s, Warren Beatty in *Bonnie and Clyde*, into the films' marketing materials. These star-driven images effectively attracted existing viewers and the new group of youth and counterculture for the studio's contemporary films. Accordingly, these three Warner Bros. films are key examples of this research study with a focus on the studio's dependence on, and negotiation for, the marketing star power at the beginning of New Hollywood.

⁹ Balio, "Selling Stars," 214.

¹⁰ See Emily Carman and Philip Drake, "Doing the Deal: Talent Contracts in Hollywood," in *Hollywood and the Law* ed. Paul McDonald, Emily Carman, Eric Hoyt and Philip Drake, (London: BFI/Palgrave, 2015), 210. Carman and Drake note that although in legal parlance the 1944 law is usually referred as the 'De Havilland Law,' the case was originally published as *De Haviland* because the Court misspelled the actress's name.

Apart from the main intention to highlight the economic significance of the inceptive New Hollywood star system carried on the 1960s star-driven films of Warner Bros., I would like to add further complications into the definition of New Hollywood, which is considered by Geoff King as “a multi-faceted creature.”¹¹ The early scholarship on New Hollywood studies, offered by some New Hollywood film scholars and critics, such as Barry Langford and Peter Biskind, finds the period is nothing except an era of new directors and a nonconformist film style.¹² In his book *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls*, Biskind claims that the impact of the art-house cinema movement and the U.S. auteurist ideology dominates the period as “a directors’ decade.”¹³ Apart from the concern on emergent directors during this period, previous New Hollywood studies, such as Barry Langford’s *Post-Classical Hollywood*, have underscored the unconventional filmmaking that distinguished New Hollywood aesthetics and “reshaped classical paradigms in the postwar period.”¹⁴ Although the non-traditional visual techniques and narrative strategies saved film studios from the financial crisis, proven by the two top-grossing films of 1967, *The Graduate* (Nichols, 1967) and *Bonnie and Clyde*, the characteristics of New Hollywood cinema were more complex and contradictory.¹⁵ The extended studies on the period have presented alternative aspects of New Hollywood which is not only subject to the auteurist influence and the unconventional filmmaking method. As Geoff King notes, New Hollywood has “significant continuities” in terms of the stylistic and industrial aspects and is not entirely characterized with a definitive version of the mid-1960s phenomenon.¹⁶ Moreover, Thomas Schatz observes that the

¹¹ Geoff King, *New Hollywood Cinema: An Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 2.

¹² See Biskind, *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls*, and Barry Langford, *Post-Classical Hollywood: Film Industry, Style and Ideology since 1945* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2010).

¹³ Biskind, *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls*, 15.

¹⁴ Langford, *Post-Classical Hollywood*, 93.

¹⁵ See Langford, *Post-Classical Hollywood*, 115. *The Graduate* grossed \$49 million in domestic markets while *Bonnie and Clyde* grossed \$24.1 million domestically, against their costs of \$3 million.

¹⁶ See King, *New Hollywood Cinema*, 2-3.

significant changes in the studio's market power and ownership also defined the attribute of the period in an industrial perspective.¹⁷ Accordingly, the critical New Hollywood perception among current scholarship has further elaborated into a complex debate requiring both stylistic and industrial contexts to comprehend this specific phase in the American film history.

According to the critically developed perspectives on New Hollywood in film scholarship, it is worth noting the changes in economic and entrepreneurial context as an important factor of the transitional period. One of the ongoing classical Hollywood constituents that has been continuously employed in New Hollywood is the marketing of film stars. Despite being neglected in Biskind's book and Langford's scholarly texts, stars at the beginning of New Hollywood were more distinctively marketable for the films than other types of creative talents. As affirmed by Paul Monaco's 1960s American film book *The Sixties: 1960-1969*, New Hollywood stars are "marketable in ways that [the other talents] are not" since the appearance of film stars, especially on relevant marketing materials and merchandises, "is the most product-like factor in a movie."¹⁸ Supported by Paul McDonald's new concept of the commercial power of Hollywood stardom, stars "are a source of economic power," equal to any "assets deployed in the market with the aim of securing commercial advantage."¹⁹ Hollywood business is a competitive market where each contender needs to acquire the most marketable element for its products with the primary purpose of consumer attraction. The 1960s film stars were consequently not short of this salable capacity since, as Thomas Schatz suggests, the stars' marquee value "gave them tremendous leverage and frequently a share of the profits."²⁰ The film

¹⁷ See Thomas Schatz, "The Studio System and Conglomerate Hollywood," in *The Contemporary Hollywood Film Industry* ed. Paul McDonald and Janet Wasko, (Malden: Blackwell, 2008), 17-18.

¹⁸ Paul Monaco, *The Sixties, 1960-1969* (New York: Scribner, 1990), 20.

¹⁹ McDonald, *Hollywood Stardom*, 11.

²⁰ Schatz, "The Studio System," 16.

stars of the time also signified distinguished brands, which, as Paul McDonald notes, functioned “as a means for perceiving the product on sale, [namely] the film,”²¹ by using their personality as a way of selling a film. The concept of star-as-brand had been continuously used since the classical era when Rita Hayworth, Claudette Colbert and Joan Crawford were successfully launched as number-one stars.²² Applying the classical concept of star branding, New Hollywood stars gained momentum in the business as an authoritative economic source for the positive performance of the film.

The selected three case studies of these seminal New Hollywood Warner Bros. films demonstrate how my argument focuses on the featured star power with the classical appeal for film salability. The familiar yet unique star image typically equated to high-grossing box office, and consequently was exploited in the major film studios since the classical era. As Richard Dyer has persuasively argued, the star image can construct a subtle point of identification with viewers since it is “a version of the American Dream, organized around the themes of consumption, success, and ordinariness.”²³ Through these qualities, the classical Hollywood film studios cultivated personae for their contracted stars to outline a sellable image for the film’s promotion.²⁴ New Hollywood inherited this star-driven marketing practice, but required revisions due to a declining number of contracted performers and a younger and more socially liberal group of viewership. As presented in Geoff King’s *New Hollywood Cinema*, selling New Hollywood stars can range from “the general outline of a star persona” to the “departures from one role to another,” or even “somewhere in between.”²⁵ The New Hollywood film star

²¹ McDonald, *Hollywood Stardom*, 44.

²² See McDonald, *Hollywood Stardom*, 45. McDonald refers to Rogers & Cowan, one of the leading public relationships companies in Hollywood since 1950s, whose founder strategized their contracted star clients as brands.

²³ Dyer, *Stars*, 35.

²⁴ King, *New Hollywood Cinema*, 152.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

marketing more embraced the notion of “off-casting” originated in the classical Hollywood period, which, as Cathy Klaprat notes, stars were “performing a role opposite from [his or] her differentiated image.”²⁶ Emily Carman suggests in *Independent Stardom* that classical Hollywood freelance actresses, including Barbara Stanwyck and Constance Bennett, who maintained the freelance clause in their studio contracts in the 1930s, applied the off-casting practice “to control the evolution of their star images.”²⁷ The practice to revamp the star image was revised for film salability in the 1960s, equating to a step of “somewhere in between” suggested by King.²⁸ The star marketing in the 1960s, therefore, combined the familiar classical image and the image variation to form a marketable persona, as clearly shown in the three case study Warner Bros. films.

Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf? marked an early combination of the classical Hollywood star appeal and the narrative of rebellion and nonconformity in its promotion. Elizabeth Taylor wholeheartedly accepted a challenge to fit in the role of an aggressive and demanding 50-year-old housewife against her real-life partner Richard Burton portraying her nervous and awkward husband. Since they played a marital role of lustful love and cruelty, it was undeniable that the couple’s on-screen image was comparable to their off-screen scandalous adultery which had taken place during *Cleopatra* (Mankiewicz, 1963) and their familiar persona of classical grace. From this self-referential connection, Warner Bros. would not miss using this aspect of Elizabeth Taylor in the promotional materials to bring the attraction of the contemporary audiences to the

²⁶ Cathy Klaprat, “The Star as Market Strategy: Bette Davis in Another Light,” in *The American Film Industry* ed. Tino Balio, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 372.

²⁷ Emily Carman, *Independent Stardom: Freelance Women in the Hollywood Studio System* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2016), 41.

²⁸ King, *New Hollywood Cinema*, 152.

show. The film then represented the first step of star-driven narrative in film promotion, which exploited the familiar star story and persona to fit in an opposite character offered by the studio.

After Warner Bros. merged with a small independent production company Seven Arts, many film producers were worried about the marketing position of their films with the studio and searched for a new way for film promotion. Fully aware of this issue, Warren Beatty, the actor-producer of *Bonnie and Clyde*, did not only rely on the established name of Warner Bros., but redeveloped his star branding in the film to symbolize modern rebellion and appeal to the emerging 1960s U.S. counterculture. The film managed to set a milestone in New Hollywood stardom since Faye Dunaway, who was “like Greta Garbo, Marlene Dietrich, or Ingrid Bergman, appear[ing] more like gods than mortals,” was cast with the charismatic Beatty to conceive an appealing and charming image of Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow.²⁹ With the strategy to combine the glamour of Beatty and Dunaway with the rebellious figures of the post-Depression years, the film advertised a nonconformist personality for the public attraction at the beginning of New Hollywood.

Although Warner Bros. presented the glamorized rebellion image of the rising stars in *Bonnie and Clyde*, the studio decided to sell an anti-heroic and deglamorized image of the established star Paul Newman in *Cool Hand Luke*. Developed as “a traditional matinee idol” and “a sex symbol” in Warner Bros. late 1950s films, Newman redefined his star persona in 1960s films, including *Cool Hand Luke*, which depicted him as an anti-hero protagonist who stood for freedom and nonconformity. Since the growing sensibility of the countercultural movement assimilated into dominant ideology of the decade, as Christine Becker suggests, Newman’s star

²⁹ Thomas Schur, “Faye Dunaway: Stardom and Ambivalence,” in *Hollywood Reborn: Movie Stars of the 1970s* ed. James Morrison, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 138.

image contributed to a figure of contradiction that suited the public interest of the era.³⁰

However, Newman did not completely abandon his matinee idol look which “Warner Bros. so valued” in his self-construction as a symbol of “youthful yet intellectualized angst and rebellion” for the sixties U.S. audience.³¹ Accordingly, this New Hollywood film represented a change in star marketing in the combined strategy of the classical star discourse and the contemporary demand to see nonconformist star representation. My study will expand the current survey of the New Hollywood era to exhibit the enduring nature of Hollywood star power in the 1960s U.S. film business.

The Reconceptualization of Hollywood Stardom before New Hollywood

Since the genesis of the studio system, Hollywood stars were a money-making machine for the classical film studios. Traditional Hollywood stars were commercially used for their attractive look and persona in the marketing materials. Mostly, the production of a star image was entirely controlled by film studios, who legally owned the star’s labor by the option contract. The personae of stars required a process to achieve the correct narrative and formula authorized by the studio for the differentiated and sellable screen image. The star’s authorized story resulted in a well-known practice of typecasting to sustain the familiar and likable persona of the star for the public audience, as appeared in the case of James Cagney, who was reportedly typecast in repeated “dese, dem, and dose” characters.³² The cultivation of the star persona by the correct narrative was steadfastly widespread throughout the industry. It also happened in a stable of MGM aristocratic stars where a teenage Judy Garland was sold as an age-defining “ugly

³⁰ Christine Becker, “Paul Newman: Superstardom and Anti-stardom,” in *New Constellations: Movie Stars of the 1960s* ed. Pamela Robertson Wojcik, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 15.

³¹ Becker, “Paul Newman,” 16.

³² Balio, “Selling Stars,” 214-215.

duckling” actress who was intentionally targeted to the younger audiences.³³ However, the traditional strategy to fixate the sellable star image based on the correct star narrative would never be in full effect without the aid of the studio’s marketing and publicity mechanics. As Balio states in his article “Selling Stars: The Economic Imperative,” the correct formula would be synergistically inscribed in publicity and advertising to suit the consumer’s interest.³⁴ The marketing and publicity team craftily deployed the established narrative and personae of the star in the press materials, such as biographies, press books, and interviews. Klaprat extends Balio’s idea that they also functioned to “transform his or her personal life to match the screen persona” in public perception.³⁵ The marketing materials, therefore, were the significant dissemination and information of the publicized screen image of the Hollywood stars to sell the films.

The strategy had lasted through the classical era and then transitioned to New Hollywood when the studios lost control over the manufacturing of the Hollywood stardom image. Due to the changing film business from the 1940s, including the social and economic climate in the 1950s and 1960s, the consumerist taste of Hollywood stardom moved from the traditional model. Stated in Robert Brustein’s 1959 article “The New Hollywood: Myth and Anti-Myth,” by the end of the 1950s the glamorous yet monotonous actors and actresses reached their dawn before the arrival of the “tousled, scratching, stammering, frequently unhandsome average” actors who embraced the realistic acting style and the independent status as an artist.³⁶ Some actors, such as Marlon Brando and Eva Marie Saint, did not present their sole beauty for attraction, but underscored their “intensity of feeling” and personal style of acting that had never been adopted

³³ Anne Helen Petersen, *Scandals of Classic Hollywood: Sex, Deviance, and Drama from the Golden Age of American Cinema* (New York: Plume, 2014), 161.

³⁴ Balio, “Selling Stars,” 217.

³⁵ Klaprat, “The Star as Market Strategy,” 352.

³⁶ Robert Brustein, “The New Hollywood: Myth and Anti-Myth,” *Film Quarterly* 12, no. 3 (Spring 1959): 23.

by the older stars.³⁷ Entering the 1960s, as Drew Casper suggests in *Hollywood Film 1963-1976: Years of Revolution and Reaction*, the popular demand on the inceptive New Hollywood stardom was more into the quality of “the counterculturalist championing of the irregular and the modernist embrace of the unruly,” which did not align with the glamorized beauty that was supreme in the classical Hollywood era.³⁸ According to the changing taste in Hollywood stardom ideology, the film business was required to revise the star marketing model to sell contemporary stars for the public that preferred more realistic characters.

The strategic approach to sell New Hollywood stars significantly traced from the classical Hollywood era when, as Carman suggests, pioneering stars secured a level of independence to collaborate with film studios and talent management for self-branding.³⁹ Until the 1960s, the stars obtained more liberal terms on their contractual agreements, resulting in their growing control on artistic choices and production involvement.⁴⁰ Through the practice of a “package deal,” the stars were encouraged to increasingly cooperate with studios and filmmakers to cultivate their image with a particular script. In some cases, they relied upon other media, such as television and music, to differentiate their branded persona.⁴¹ Moreover, most of the New Hollywood stars required aids from press agents and publicity persons for media relationships and image communication to the public.⁴² In film publicity, the star exposure involved studios or

³⁷ Brustein, “The New Hollywood,” 26.

³⁸ Drew Casper, *Hollywood Film 1963-1976: Years of Revolution and Reaction* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 39.

³⁹ See Carman, *Independent Stardom*, 39-40. Carman notes that many female stars in the 1930s, such as Barbara Stanwyck, Constance Bennett, Katharine Hepburn, and Carole Lombard, initiated agreements with film studios and producers, with the help of agents, to negotiate for higher salaries and increase creative control over their works.

⁴⁰ See more Monaco, *The Sixties*, 19-20, and Pamela Robertson Wojcik, “Introduction: Stardom in the 1960s,” in *New Constellations: Movie Stars of the 1960s* ed. Pamela Robertson Wojcik, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 5-6.

⁴¹ Gorham Kindem, “Hollywood’s Movie Star System: A Historical Overview,” in *The American Movie Industry: The Business of Motion Pictures* ed. Gorham Kindem, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982), 80.

⁴² Paul McDonald, “The Star System: The Production of Hollywood Stardom in the Post-Studio Era,” in *The Contemporary Hollywood Film Industry* ed. Paul McDonald and Janet Wasko, (Malden: Blackwell, 2008), 174.

producers in defining the star image in response to the direction of film promotion. The studios partly involved in the star's branding for their soon-to-be-released film products, as McDonald suggests, by creating exposure and applying "elaborate stunts" of the stars to gain the media and public attention.⁴³ The "stunts" were transformed into marketing ideas to commodify the stars as bankable elements for the film's highest financial performance. The strategies can be inherited from the traditional method of the association between the film role and the real star persona to intuitively convince the viewers that the "characters played by stars [...] become 'more like' the star persona as a film unfolds."⁴⁴

However, the star "stunt" can be interpreted as a total contrast of uncommon film roles which enabled stars to refashion their image. Proposed by Klaprat, the approach was first introduced when Bette Davis performed a naïve lady role in *That Certain Woman* (Goulding, 1937) under her contract with Warner Bros.⁴⁵ Arguably challenged by Carman's counter evidence, the practice was earlier rooted in the early 1930s when classical Hollywood actresses, such as Constance Bennett, Carole Lombard, and Barbara Stanwyck, became "creative agents who molded their own self-representation onscreen."⁴⁶ The creative freedom to revamp the star image with diverse and opposite roles in the classical Hollywood era was redeveloped in the 1960s as to the more diverse role options. Hollywood stars in the 1960s were willing to perform the roles that reflected countercultural sensibilities yet sustained conventional beauty to bolster a new attractive image in contemporary films. This showed the repurposing process of New Hollywood stardom at the beginning when defined based on the classical Hollywood star

⁴³ McDonald, "The Star System," 175.

⁴⁴ King, *New Hollywood Cinema*, 155.

⁴⁵ See Klaprat, "The Star as Market Strategy," 374. Klaprat marks that when Warner Bros. experimented to offcast Davis in the 1937 film, the strategy was well-received with the sixth rank at the box office of the year.

⁴⁶ Carman, *Independent Stardom*, 40.

practice to fulfill the financial ambition at that time, as precisely described in the selected cases of Warner Bros. late 1960s films, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Bonnie and Clyde* and *Cool Hand Luke*.

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?: Opposite Attraction of the Classical Star

By the time that Warner Bros. produced the film starring famous couple Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton, Hollywood started to realize classical Hollywood style films were no longer profitable products, partly due to the gradually dominant countercultural movement. As Harry M. Benshoff explains in "1966: Movies and Camp," the business was "out of touch with the era's countercultural sensibilities" and forced to create "underground and exploitation films, as well as more idiosyncratic auteur films from Europe" during the industrial transition.⁴⁷

Hollywood needed to reaffirm the domestic fan base, which had developed countercultural mentality and appreciated more precarious content rather than what Hollywood had offered them. In the late 1960s, one of the most significant tactics used to attract that fan base was star power. Warner Bros. utilized a revised Hollywood stardom discourse to create significant marketing and publicity campaigns for their films' sake. The studio chose to blend in the classic stardom power of Elizabeth Taylor, as well as her counterpart Richard Burton, to distance the film's characters from their established star images prior to *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*.

Based on a critically acclaimed stage play written by talented American playwright Edward Albee, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* became creative material for film adaptation at that time because of its thematic controversy and portrayal of unusual characters. Ernest Lehman, the film producer of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, claimed that no studios, except

⁴⁷ Harry M. Benshoff, "1966: Movies and Camp," in *American Cinema of the 1960s: Themes and Variations* ed. Barry Keith Grant, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 150.

Warner Bros., wanted to acquire Albee's script because the material lacked potential for a good conventional motion picture.⁴⁸ The producer also affirmed that Jack Warner was thrilled to adapt this play to revamp his studio since it served "objectionable" and "censorable" content that violated the Motion Picture Production Code.⁴⁹ Apart from its story aspect that sparked the concern of censorship during its production and after its release, the larger-than-life characters of George and Martha as the film's central figures were one of the significant elements that the studio needed to carefully cast for the film's merit. In consultation with Lehman, Jack Warner approved the casting of Elizabeth Taylor in the wife's role, although he initially found her outward appearance, real age, and, most importantly, image as a classically glamorous star did not correspond to the fictional character.⁵⁰ The studio took the risk to deconstruct Taylor's quality of classical glamour with Martha's wild and absurd characteristics. Meanwhile, Taylor intentionally reworked her persona to form an aging and reckless character for the movie.

To sell Elizabeth Taylor in an aged look with an aggressive personality, Warner Bros.'s publicity team worked hard to reflect the transition between her recognized glamour and an altogether different image from the start of the production. The studio carefully planned to launch the unforeseeable character of Taylor with the hope to surprise the world. From the film's production policy, the studio applied "a policy of no visitors, press, photographers" on the set and attempted to keep Taylor and her partner Burton away from any off-set interviews.⁵¹ The production team became more strict with the star couple by not allowing them to wear character

⁴⁸ See Ernest Lehman, interview by Roy Newquist, transcript, Sales (Ephraim) Collection of Tapes and Transcripts of Interviews by Roy Newquist ca. 1963-1967, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA hereafter).

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Lehman, interview by Roy Newquist, transcript, UCLA.

⁵¹ Inter-Office Memo to Joe Hyams from Max Bercutt, dated July 30, 1965, Box 5, folder 2763, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Papers, WBA.

makeup when attending any press meetings.⁵² Although the press did not predominantly cover Taylor's new character in the film during the production, the media was all aware that the film would "give Elizabeth the outstanding acting role of her career" due to her physical transformation and complex performance in the film adaptation.⁵³ After the end of shooting, Warner Bros. launched Taylor's dowdy look of Martha through multiple marketing materials and publicity campaigns. For example, the star's appearance as a "boozy, tired, greying Virago" was featured in one of the film marketing materials, selling a bizarre appearance of the glamorous Taylor.⁵⁴ The advertisement of her unorthodox image as Martha expressed to the press that this was going to be a new type of role, as compared to her previous film roles as a classical Hollywood actress. In a 1966 *Los Angeles Times* review article, Taylor's differing appearance in the film endorsed her new status as an accomplished talent, who carried "her powers as an actress rather more than as ticket-seller" as in her previous film works.⁵⁵ The film redefined Taylor by using her classical glamour to redevelop her image as a versatile actress. As observed by Paul Monaco, Taylor marked the turning point for classical Hollywood actresses in the late 1960s with this role to "play against type, [...] the physical attractiveness and values of character classically associated with star roles."⁵⁶ Accordingly, Taylor's portrayal of Martha in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* proved financially successful to the studio for demystifying her classical beauty value and translating it into a new image.

⁵² Lehman, interview by Roy Newquist, transcript, UCLA.

⁵³ Kate Cameron, "Magnificent Acting in 'Virginia Woolf'," *Daily News*, June 24, 1966, Clipping Files, Box 2, folder 664, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Papers, WBA.

⁵⁴ Pressbook of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, Page 16, Box 2, folder 695, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Papers, WBA.

⁵⁵ Charles Champlin, "He Wasn't Afraid of 'Virginia Woolf'," *Los Angeles Times*, June 23, 1966, Clipping Files, Box 2, folder 664, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Papers, WBA.

⁵⁶ Monaco, *The Sixties*, 128.

In the infancy of New Hollywood, the stars, including Elizabeth Taylor, gained more creative control over their presence and professional space. Taylor's choice to play Martha demonstrated the new cultural and economic function of New Hollywood stardom as it challenged the classical star stance as an outmoded ideological and industrial asset in the landscape of contemporary Hollywood. Initially Taylor felt worried that she might be wrongly cast for the part because of her younger age and different personality. This skepticism arose from her firm association with the concept of classical grace that pictured her the image of "youth, glamour, and varying regard for her abilities as an actress."⁵⁷ This image also caused hesitation from Warner Bros. regarding her ability to play the role. However, Lehman and Warner Bros. believed in her classical image, which would create a "vitally important, yet somehow less tangible" presence for the forthcoming production.⁵⁸ Taylor expressed that the role was "difficult" but also "one of the most challenging, exciting and demanding woman's roles in [...] many years" of her active career journey.⁵⁹ Taylor's decision to take on the Martha role contributed to a redefinition of the classical star image that survived the industrial change by combining her classical appeal and realistic performance.

Taylor's decision significantly dealt with revision of her problematic image and career revival during the 1960s. As Paul Monaco observes, among classical Hollywood stars who had continued their acting careers in the 1960s, only Taylor was able to sustain a professional prospect as a serious dramatic and versatile talent throughout the decade, especially from the role

⁵⁷ Lehman, interview by Roy Newquist, transcript, UCLA.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ See Elizabeth Taylor, interview by Roy Newquist, transcript, Sales (Ephraim) Collection of Tapes and Transcripts of Interviews by Roy Newquist ca. 1963-1967, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*.⁶⁰ To counter public opinion about being “out of control,” such as “sexual voracity, weight gains, constant illnesses, drug and alcohol use, [...] lavishing spending,” and a notorious relationship with Richard Burton, Taylor revived her career and personal life with a conception of a serious and hard-working actress.⁶¹ The work in this film required Taylor to provide not only an innate grace and talent but a high level of responsibility and obligations, as elaborated in her on-set interview with Roy Newquist.⁶² Her performance in the film did not only revoke her “bad Liz” past as generally covered in the news, but also shaped a new way to perceive the well-established star as more humanized and sophisticated in the personal and professional aspects. According to Carl Combs, the production’s unit publicist, Taylor’s personality while working was likable and could be “a press agent dream” due to her “articulate and bright” attitude.⁶³ Lehman also endorsed her professional capacity on the set as he recalled that she surprised him with “the degree of her intelligence and understanding of the role she was playing.”⁶⁴ Her positive feedback as a serious Hollywood actress reflected in the film’s marketing materials to rebuild her credible and professional image and also to verify the film’s commercial competence. For example, the film’s press release detailed Taylor’s effort to make a physical change to suit the role by gaining more weight and dieting as ordered by the director

⁶⁰ See Monaco, *The Sixties*, 127. Monaco notes that in the 1960s there were other Hollywood actresses who had been professionally recognized from the 1950s but were unable to reinvent themselves cinematically in the way that Taylor did. For example, Janet Leigh, who had been nominated for the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress in *Psycho* (Hitchcock, 1960), played in less important roles throughout the decade. Also, Joanne Woodward managed to only boost her career prominence from a spinster role in *Rachel, Rachel* (Newman, 1968), a film produced and directed by her husband Paul Newman.

⁶¹ Alexander Doty, “Elizabeth Taylor: The Biggest Star in the World,” in *New Constellations: Movie Stars of the 1960s* ed. Pamela Robertson Wojcik, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 34.

⁶² Taylor, interview by Roy Newquist, transcript, UCLA.

⁶³ See Carl Combs, interview by Roy Newquist, transcript, Sales (Ephraim) Collection of Tapes and Transcripts of Interviews by Roy Newquist ca. 1963-1967, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

⁶⁴ Lehman, interview by Roy Newquist, transcript, UCLA.

and the producer.⁶⁵ Accordingly, Taylor's role in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* was an approach for Taylor to communicate the other side of her image as a serious but gracious actress who accepted "the professional challenge of a lifetime."⁶⁶

The re-reading of Elizabeth Taylor's image in the 1960s would not be accomplished without her contingent relationship with Richard Burton. His involvement as Taylor's romantic partner and notorious lover is essential to her contemporary public persona because, as Suzanne Leonard notes, their film roles were always "aligned with their star persona that they were often considered to be playing themselves on screen."⁶⁷ Since the *Cleopatra* scandal, the couple was overwhelmed with public scrutiny of their immoral promiscuity, as well as popular interest in their epic romance depicted in the Roman-themed epic film. The affair scandalized the film's studio, Twentieth Century Fox, which allowed sexual transgressions onscreen, and the nation that risked the diplomatic relationship with Italy due to Taylor's adulterous behavior.⁶⁸ However, the couple's love affair put an "unscripted reality" into the film which amazed international audiences with their "loving and courageous" act of romance.⁶⁹ As a result, Taylor was consistently framed by the narrative of a courageous and great lover with Burton, which affected her post-*Cleopatra* film career. As Justin Wyatt engages in Taylor and Burton's prestigious romance, producers and studios that were able to lock in Taylor and Burton for later roles always

⁶⁵ Press release of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, Page 2, Box 2, folder 695, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Papers, WBA.

⁶⁶ "Elizabeth Taylor Is Not Afraid of 'Virginia Woolf'," WBA.

⁶⁷ Suzanne Leonard, "The 'True Love' of Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton," in *Reclaiming the Archive: Feminism and Film History* ed. Vicki Callahan, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2010), 74-5.

⁶⁸ See Leonard, "True Love," 77. Leonard describes that Taylor and Burton's romantic relationship became increasingly significant thanks to its association with the bankrupting of Twentieth Century Fox, after taking over three years and forty million dollars to produce *Cleopatra*. Although the studio denied involvement in their affair during the production, it pulled a publicity stunt to raise the profile of the film, as suggested by U.S. Congresswoman Iris Blitch who urged the Attorney General to deny the couple reentry into the United States due to their adulterous behavior.

⁶⁹ Leonard, "True Love," 78.

“reap[ed] the financial rewards of the pair’s notoriety” along with their well-established individual prestige that elevated the film’s exceptional status.⁷⁰ It also happened in the Taylor-Burton adult drama film, *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, where their notorious past drew attention to the couple’s real relationship. However, as Leonard notes, the impact of the couple’s perception was reversed to portray Taylor and Burton less romantically epic but more human-like and problematic in marriage.⁷¹

The deconstruction of the couple’s epic love story into the bitter marriage was translated into the film’s marketing materials. The film’s press release identified their film portrayal as “the self-destructive, omnivorous campus couple,” which was opposite to their romantically ideal image of their *Cleopatra* love story.⁷² Also, this approach in the marketing materials of *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* changed the public perception towards the scandalous couple in more realistic and complex way. For example, Taylor and Burton’s cover look on *Look Magazine*, issued February 8, 1966, impressed the studio since it boosted the selling of the stars with the concept of “new and extraordinary reaches of drama.”⁷³ Also, the film’s release draft was referential to the couple’s dramatic relationship to substantiate their professional acclaim as “the cinema’s most violent and embattled couple.”⁷⁴ Their appearance in the film, therefore, influenced the studio’s marketing strategy on the star-driven narrative to endorse the revision of Taylor’s public image as a veteran multi-talented actress in late 1960s Hollywood. Her case

⁷⁰ Justin Wyatt, “Bridging Commerce and Classification through the American Art Film: The Case of *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1966),” in *The Hollywood Renaissance: Revisiting American Cinema’s Most Celebrated Era* ed. Peter Krämer and Yannis Tzioumakis, (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 6.

⁷¹ See Leonard, “True Love,” 89. Leonard marks that Taylor and Burton reportedly adore arguing and fighting in their daily life. Also, the couple usually forces each other into physical violence when arguing. The negative side of the couple’s marriage enunciates in their portrayal as George and Martha.

⁷² Press release of *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, Page 2, WBA.

⁷³ Telegram to WM. B. Arthur from Max Bercutt, Box 2, folder 695, *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Papers, WBA.

⁷⁴ Release draft to Feature Service No.1, Page 1, Box 7, folder 14677B, *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Papers, WBA.

addressed one of the star marketing approaches to fuse the image characterization, established classic persona and private intimacy into a star image reversal for the film's positive box office during the entry to New Hollywood.

Bonnie and Clyde: Historical Myth and Modern Glamour

Seen as one of the first films that was produced under the newly merging company, Warner Bros.-Seven Arts, *Bonnie and Clyde* faced a significant challenge in terms of the film branding at the beginning of New Hollywood. At first, Jack Warner thought the innovative project of *Bonnie and Clyde* would never work in the mid-1960s because the classic gangster themes and styles did not capture the contemporary attraction and most importantly “went out with Cagney” in the 1930s.⁷⁵ As his first producing responsibility, the rising Hollywood star Warren Beatty demanded the studio to give him, and the assigned director Arthur Penn, creative autonomy over the project, so that they could apply their unique production culture and vision to the film. However, the studio was partly involved in the film's management, including cast selection. The featured stars, Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway, became the attraction of the film that helped financially boost the film's box office. Despite its transition to a new conglomerate, Warner Bros. put an emphasis on star power to secure a film in the box office rank. The studio executives used their power to secure the service of Dunaway, who was at that point a young actress with a look of conventional beauty, and negotiate her screen credit to equate to the size of her co-star and film producer Beatty.⁷⁶ The studio would also play the main

⁷⁵ Jerome Christensen, *America's Corporate Art: The Studio Authorship of Hollywood Motion Pictures* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 246.

⁷⁶ Peter Labuza, “Putting Penn to Paper: Warner Bros.’ Contract Governance and the Transition to New Hollywood,” *The Velvet Light Trap* 80 (Fall 2017): 10.

role to craft the leading stars into the romanticized and modernized narrative of the 1930s notorious bandit couple, Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow, on- and off-screen.

As the new demographics of postwar viewership comprised what Denise Mann notes as “the baby boom generation [...] and large numbers of college-bound youth,” led the alternative trends in film marketing in the 1960s, the main challenge for Warner Bros. was to acquire a strategic approach to build an active engagement between the film and these new viewers.⁷⁷ The studio chose to exploit the star power into relevant characters to form an appealing image for the contemporary viewers of coming-of-age youth. When the plan to bring Bonnie and Clyde into screen was offered at Warner Bros., it would be impossible for the studio to disregard Beatty’s conventionally handsome look and Dunaway’s traditional glamour in their romanticized version of the characters. Bonnie and Clyde by Beatty and Dunaway were consequently reinterpreted into a favorable portrayal for the public attention. The fictional criminal characters were barely depicted “a pair of human rats” as the filmmakers did not intend to achieve its historical accuracy.⁷⁸ Apart from the thematic focus, the primary strategy to sell the film was to mold the characters to look “fashionable” for the attention of the viewers.⁷⁹ Accordingly, the studio and the filmmakers expected that the criminal characters would be “likable and sympathetic” enough to “generat[e] affection and sympathy” in the target audiences.⁸⁰

The classical Hollywood star quality in Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway played a significant role in effectively boosting the romanticized reconstruction of the criminal tale. The

⁷⁷ Denise Mann, *Hollywood Independents: The Postwar Talent Takeover* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 6.

⁷⁸ Joseph Benjamin, “‘Bonnie and Clyde’ – Facts? Meaning? Art?,” *New York Times*, September 17, 1967.

⁷⁹ Inter-Office Memo to Dick Lederer from Tom Buchanan, dated July 23, 1967, Box 1, folder 12998A, *Bonnie and Clyde Papers*, WBA.

⁸⁰ A.W. Eaton, “Rough Heroes of the New Hollywood,” *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 64, no. 254 (2010): 516.

personae and appeal of these stars were multifaceted, but their image as reinvigorated Old Hollywood icons was explicitly presented in Penn's film. Known for her "beautiful and poised, yet resolute and determined" qualities, Dunaway managed to construct her glamorous look and captivating character as a suggestively sexual and charismatic Bonnie Parker.⁸¹ Meanwhile, Warren Beatty made use of his "All-American ideal" look plus his acting talent to express his noticeable ingenuity and personal magnetism as a charming Clyde Barrow in the film.⁸² The stars' physical attributes were also in the film's promotion to highlight coherence between the star image and the characters. Dunaway's curated biography for *Bonnie and Clyde*'s advertisement accentuated her physical features and clothing style for a nostalgic "high fashion model" branding.⁸³ Also, Beatty's gifted facial and vocal characteristics were meant to snatch the public attention in *Bonnie and Clyde* since a Warner Bros. studio executive saw that his star image that derived from the Clyde character should have been targeted for "the so-called chic people," the "jet setters," and "the fashion buffs" of the time.⁸⁴ The studio, therefore, widely disseminated their romanticized looks of the cool runaway criminals, using their physical attributes and personae, for the film's purpose of salability.

For *Bonnie and Clyde*, the studio utilized the film's costume as a central link between the classical concept of Old Hollywood glamour and the romanticized historical myth through Beatty and Dunaway's appearances. As A.W. Eaton suggests, the film's costuming, including

⁸¹ Schur, "Faye Dunaway," 138.

⁸² See Chris Cagle, "Robert Redford and Warren Beatty: Consensus Stars for a Post-Consensus Age," in *Hollywood Reborn: Movie Stars of the 1970s* ed. James Morrison, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 42. Cagle marks that physiognomy was important in Beatty's star image construction. His reportedly observed look was critically central to his body, features, and face that represent his All-Americanness as the star's main characteristics.

⁸³ Biography of Faye Dunaway, Box 1, folder 1779, *Bonnie and Clyde* Papers, WBA.

⁸⁴ Letter to Arthur C. McClure from Richard Lederer, dated February 19, 1968, Box 1, folder 12998A, *Bonnie and Clyde* Papers, WBA.

makeup, enhanced “their sexiness and magnetic appeal” in the film.⁸⁵ The 1930s dress played an essential role in portraying the infamous counterparts less socially unacceptable and more commercially attractive. The wardrobe in this film also helped connect the presence of both stars with the notion of classic Hollywood glamour. For example, Dunaway’s portrayal of Bonnie in “sleek yet slightly tomboyish style” elevated the star as a contemporary fashion icon globally.⁸⁶ Thanks to the limited budget of the production, Theodora Van Runkle, the costume designer of the production, designed the costumes of only Beatty and Dunaway, while other actors reused the studio’s old wardrobe.⁸⁷ The 1930s film costume firmly connected to the leading stars as a symbol of classical Hollywood revitalization in the new setting of a “New Wave-inspired counterculture film of the late 1960s.”⁸⁸ Consequently, the studio took advantage of the perspective of wardrobe to emphasize its commercial leverage for the romanticized star image in the marketing of the film.

The 1930s costumes worn by Beatty and Dunaway became one of the main highlights in the marketing materials to sell the film in connection with the Old Hollywood appeal. As appeared in the film’s press book, the studio suggested for the contracted exhibitors to highlight the aspect that the stars were “in the high-styled clothes of the 1930s” at their on-site promotion.⁸⁹ Also, the visual promotional materials accentuated the importance of the film costume for the fantasized portrayal of the outlaw characters. For instance, Beatty and Dunaway were solely highlighted with the nostalgic costume in the film’s lobby card to create a conscious

⁸⁵ Eaton, “Rough Heroes,” 516.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Mark Harris, *Pictures at a Revolution: Five Movies and the Birth of the New Hollywood* (New York: Penguin Press, 2008), 250.

⁸⁸ Mann, *Hollywood Independents*, 1.

⁸⁹ Pressbook of *Bonnie and Clyde*, Page 8, Box 1, folder 16324, *Bonnie and Clyde* Papers, WBA.

association between the Hollywood glamorous stars and the 1930s notoriety.⁹⁰ The aspect was also more elaborated in the film's press kit that featured the tale-like synopsis and the illustrations of Beatty and Dunaway's characters in historical costume.⁹¹ The studio also used the film's trailer and TV spots to exploit the wardrobe of the characters for advertising the star image with, as Robert Ray points out, "intent on celebrity."⁹² The editing techniques and footage selection were used to showcase the costumes' impact on the star image. The scene where "Bonnie, Clyde, Buck, sister-in-law and C. W. Moss are posing for Kodak snapshots," with "the famous cigar-smoking shot of Bonnie" in her charismatic 1930s look, was included in the media spot to attract the general audience.⁹³ The marketing, therefore, signified Old Hollywood glamour through the fashion of New Hollywood stars and reconstructed the romanticized characters of Bonnie and Clyde that had the potential to be popular to the U.S. audiences of youth and counterculture.

Apart from the traditional print advertisement, the film studio attempted to translate the 1930s fashion aspect into the synergistic promotional event. Before the film was released, Warner Bros. applied various means to execute the film promotion, including a special album of the film featuring the film's soundtrack and a dozen of excerpted dialogue tracks.⁹⁴ However, the synergistic strategy, which achieved the highest success in creating the film buzz, was a dressing contest. This plan was meant to establish a closer association between the film and the leading stars through the practice of dressing. As appeared in the official marketing book distributed to

⁹⁰ See Lobby Card of *Bonnie and Clyde*, Motion Picture Lobby Cards 1913-1999, Library Special Collections, Performing Arts, UCLA.

⁹¹ See Pictorial Souvenir of *Bonnie and Clyde*, Collection of Motion Picture Press Kits, Library Special Collections, Performing Arts, UCLA.

⁹² Robert B. Ray, *A Certain Tendency of the Hollywood Cinema, 1930-1980* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 289.

⁹³ Inter-Office Memo to Dick Lederer from Tom Buchanan, dated July 23, 1967, WBA.

⁹⁴ Robert Shelton, "Record Companies Are Plugging 'Bonnie and Clyde'," *New York Times*, March 11, 1968.

the exhibitors, a fashion show or an opening-day party featuring the 1930s garments was highly recommended to create consciousness of the movie via the stars' costumes.⁹⁵ Also, the studio distributed publicity stills of the two main stars wearing their 1930s characters' garments to endorse the costume engagement for the higher rate of theater entrance.⁹⁶ Besides the endorsement about the costume aspect, the studio also created a cross-over promotional event for the film *Bonnie and Clyde* with the 1930s costume approach. Reportedly organized at Century City in Los Angeles, the event featured a fashion show where the 1930s nostalgic fashion was encouraged to make an appearance. The wardrobe aspect was more evident when the Academy Awards nominee and costume designer of the production Van Runkle was invited as a guest judge for the contest.⁹⁷ The studio even discussed with the Merchants Association Promotion Committee to find a possible way to bring in a personal appearance of Warren Beatty to the promotional event at Century City.⁹⁸ This example highlights the studio's attempt to use the 1930s wardrobe as a promotional strategy to create recognition in the new star image of Beatty and Dunaway as the 1930s glamorous version of Bonnie and Clyde.

Accordingly, *Bonnie and Clyde* constructed the romanticized version of the 1930s criminal thrill-seeker narrative vis-à-vis the existing star image of Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway. The studio revitalized Old Hollywood glamour from the historical myth of Bonnie and Clyde to form a new star persona of modern rebellion favored by the countercultural young audiences. While Dunaway's "coolness [...] created a stylized interpretation" of the character to sustain an impact on a new salable type of female role, Beatty's "persona that displayed an

⁹⁵ Pressbook of *Bonnie and Clyde*, Page 8, WBA.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Century City News, dated March 14, 1968, Marty Weiser Papers, Margaret Herrick Library (MHL hereafter), Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS).

⁹⁸ Letter to Century Square Merchants from Jack O. Easton, dated January 30, 1968, Marty Weiser Papers, MHL, AMPAS.

essential sense of bewilderment” solidified the fantasized characterization of the male counterpart for public impression.⁹⁹ Apart from the stars’ classical quality, the studio also employed the costume aspect in the film’s marketing campaigns as a main approach to demonstrate the nostalgic effect of classical Hollywood glamour in connection with the star appeal as a criminal couple. The 1967 film produced by Warner Bros. showed the New Hollywood star image reconstruction that utilized the romanticized interpretation of historical figures with the classical personae of the contemporary stars.

Cool Hand Luke: Stardom of Rebellion

Among the Warner Bros. films produced during the early period of the New Hollywood business, it was undeniable that *Cool Hand Luke*, a rebellion-themed picture directed by Stuart Rosenberg, was one of the most rebellious movies of 1967. Apart from the film content that focused on a prisoner breaking down systematic repression, the appearance of matinee idol actor Paul Newman boosted the popularity of the “rebel-run” film. As one of the contemporary Hollywood stars whose marquee name generated instant profit for featured movies, Newman contributed to a new definition of the New Hollywood stardom with the quality of rebellion through his inherent character.¹⁰⁰ Despite his conventionally handsome look contradicting his 1960s nonconformist identity, the star managed to find a balance in his star persona, and thus elevated himself into the mainstream symbol of the 1960s nonconformity.¹⁰¹ Following the thematic content of the 1967 rebellion film budgeted by Warner Bros., *Cool Hand Luke*, Newman’s individualistic and anti-heroic personality fitted into the character mold of Lucas

⁹⁹ Monaco, *The Sixties*, 134 and 140.

¹⁰⁰ See “Paul Newman Says It’s ‘Unrealistic’ to Idolize Actors,” *Warner Bros. News Release* 7, no. 9 (March 10-17), Box 1, folder 640, *Cool Hand Luke* Papers, WBA.

¹⁰¹ Wojcik, “Introduction,” 12.

“Luke” Jackson, who did not comply with the restrictive system of the rural chain gangs.

Accordingly, the film studio incorporated the star’s look and ideal of anti-heroism into the film’s marketing plans and promotions to affect the countercultural sensibilities booming in the wave of New Hollywood.

Cool Hand Luke represented the American cinema of 1967 and the countercultural era since its rebellion theme contributed to what Murray Pomerance understands as “the most perduringly interesting films of the year all promised to directly address.”¹⁰² The film would have never been successfully eye-catching for the public in 1967 without the groundbreaking character of the disobedient prisoner Luke. Newman’s performance as the rebel Luke allowed the nation to be exposed to “the discrepancy between “official” images and rhetoric and real-world experiences,” which meant the reality did not reflect the conventional ideology established in the past decades.¹⁰³ Many moments in the film revealed Newman’s participation in sustaining the revolutionary consciousness within the actual society from his facial expression and performative gestures. As demonstrated in the final scene of the film, including a brief shot featured in the film’s official trailer, Rosenberg included a somewhat “happy ending” of Newman’s character with his trademark smile.¹⁰⁴ This captivating “smile” of Newman signified his past career as a sex symbol in the 1950s. Alternatively, it could be read as a smirk, a symbol against the traditional system of repression prevalently dominated over the union and, implicitly,

¹⁰² Murray Pomerance, “1967: Movies and the Specter of Rebellion,” in *American Cinema of the 1960s: Themes and Variations* ed. Barry Keith Grant, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 175.

¹⁰³ Alexander Horwath, “The Impure Cinema: New Hollywood 1967-1976,” in *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood Cinema in the 1970s* ed. Thomas Elsaesser, Alexander Horwath and Noel King, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), 12.

¹⁰⁴ See Pomerance, “1967,” 178. Pomerance notes that Rosenberg did not impress with the original, more tragic, ending of the film. He asked to shoot a new scene where presents “Luke smile” in order to give a delightful solution to the story arc. However, seeing the tough search for liberty by an eccentric prisoner, the smile becomes more satirical and symbolic to societal hopelessness as the protagonist does not gain true freedom as determined.

the American society. Newman's complex persona, therefore, signified the new spirit of rebellion in the film and suited the contemporary ideology which preferred fictional protagonists who, as Drew Casper notes, "embodied the countercultural sensibility."¹⁰⁵

As his repetitive role as a societal rebel in the 1960s, starting from *The Hustler* (Rossen, 1961), *Hud* (Ritt, 1963), *Hombre* (Ritt, 1967) to Warner Bros.'s *Cool Hand Luke*, social nonconformity and anti-heroism informed Paul Newman's stardom and became one of the defining male characters of the decade. His popular personality contributed to an article for men to "imitate" Newman's cool and independent image. In a 1970 *Los Angeles Times* article, Joseph P. Devlin compiled a list of tips of "How to Be a Cool Hand Imitating Paul Newman" for those who wanted to stay "cool," be "a red-blooded-American boy," "win friends," and, rather most importantly, "influence women."¹⁰⁶ This article suggestively defined Newman's evident character from his previous works of films throughout the 1960s, such as reconstructing a living environment, buying an old and junky Volkswagen, and developing a personal language in Newman's style.¹⁰⁷ Devlin's column also resonated the enduring popularity of Newman's personality as Luke in *Cool Hand Luke*. The article specifically encouraged male readers to buy "wardrobe at Goodwill Industries," chew "Black Jack gum" or "a toothpick," and practice "a Newman smile."¹⁰⁸ The tips that exemplified Newman's *Cool Hand Luke* character represented the combination between his captivating look and hippie lifestyle to form a distinct appearance which the contemporary male audience should follow. These tips significantly signified Newman's nonconformist attitude, non-heroic quality, and lukewarm personality as a Hollywood star in his reconstructed persona. Accordingly, the defining character of rebellion and anti-

¹⁰⁵ Casper, *Hollywood Film 1963-1976*, 17.

¹⁰⁶ Joseph P. Devlin, "How to be a Cool Hand Imitating Paul Newman," *Los Angeles Times*, May 10, 1970.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

heroism originated by Newman became the “super cool” lifestyle by the end of the decade, which encouraged film studios to capture the essence of Newman and translate it into the salable aspect.

From Newman’s rebellious attitude and personality widely recognized among the public, Warner Bros. anticipated this persona in the selling of the film via its promotional materials. As Christine Becker notes, since this character captivated the specific group of “the flower children, the hippies, [and] the disconnected young” people in the U.S., the studio targeted them in the advertisement plans using Newman’s rebellious character.¹⁰⁹ The film’s marketing contents mainly included a branded narrative of rebellion and anti-stardom which continually cultivated in Newman’s film career. For example, in a radio script draft from AP news features, the press perceived Newman, somewhat negatively, as the actor who did not conform to the traditional concept of Hollywood stardom. They called the star an “anti-star” who always played “non-heroes” in his films.¹¹⁰ The anti-heroic perpetuation in Newman’s publicity was further elaborated in other press materials, which truly benefited the Warner Bros.’s film promotion. In an article from *Newsweek* magazine, the reporter found that Newman’s star magnetism derived from his behavior of “rejecting many things a standard star has come to mean,” affirming his star status more distinctively than any other male Hollywood stars at that time.¹¹¹ Also, the press confirmed that Newman’s preference for a rugged, individualistic film role attached to his star identity and played a significant role in making his films successful at the box office. In an article from *Film Bulletin*, Newman’s role selection as Luke proved to be a strong point that would potentially “make the Warner Bros. release a strong grosser and an audience winner in the

¹⁰⁹ Becker, “Paul Newman,” 21.

¹¹⁰ Radio Script Draft of *Cool Hand Luke*, dated January 10, Box 1, folder 649A, *Cool Hand Luke* Papers, WBA.

¹¹¹ “Cool Hand Paul,” *Newsweek*, dated January 23, 1967, Box 1, folder 649A, *Cool Hand Luke* Papers, WBA.

mass metropolitan markets.”¹¹² The perception towards Paul Newman as rebellious, anti-star stardom massively benefited the upcoming release of Warner Bros. since his amalgamation of the beautiful look and the independent lifestyle became a recognized mainstream star brand of the decade and subsequently a booster of the tremendous ticket purchases at theaters.

Apart from his labeled brand as an anti-hero in the films, the studio and the press did not disregard Newman’s private aspect to complement his onscreen image. Despite some reports on Newman’s “boyish playfulness” and drinking habit typifying the lifestyle of Hollywood actors, the general press publicity mainly stressed his offscreen version as a “headstrong yet principled [...] against the excesses of stardom.”¹¹³ Journalist Peter Bart once noted in his exclusive article about Newman that the actor resolutely tried to be independent of the convention of classical stardom: “the personal appearance tours, the autograph orgies, the grand entrances at movie premieres, the regular attendance at the Bistro or the Daisy, the interviews with the press.”¹¹⁴ This kind of offscreen behavior reflected his star power to buck the system that always labelled him in the traditional concept of male Hollywood stardom. Although his ideal of countercultural Hollywood icons contrasted with traditional practices in Hollywood such as typecasting, Newman “fortified his image as a benevolent dissident,” using his established star power to change star dynamics in the industry.¹¹⁵ The star did not mean to negate the classical Hollywood star discourse, but to demonstrate versatility and capability of Hollywood stars as an actor by revising the classical persona for the new counterculture viewers. Newman’s struggle against the conventional Hollywood star system provoked the performative role of Luke in Rosenberg’s film

¹¹² “Cool Hand Luke,” *Film Bulletin*, dated June 1967, Box 1, folder 649A, *Cool Hand Luke Papers*, WBA.

¹¹³ Becker, “Paul Newman,” 26.

¹¹⁴ Peter Bart, “A Newman Non-Interview,” dated October 9, 1966, Box 1, folder 649A, *Cool Hand Luke Papers*, WBA.

¹¹⁵ Becker, “Paul Newman,” 26.

since the actor and the character both demonstrated “the ultimate nonconformist and rebel [as] a free agent.”¹¹⁶ It was proved that Newman’s spirit of rebellion always contributed to his film’s box office success.¹¹⁷ Accordingly, Newman’s anti-star philosophy became a strong brand to his star identity, in which the studios, including Warner Bros., exploited the rebel identity for the financial success of the films.

Newman redefined his conventionally attractive quality to the new figure of Hollywood stardom during the countercultural years since his rebel identity was, what Paul Monaco defines, “one of the American moviegoer’s favorite symbols [...] in the late 1960s.”¹¹⁸ His star ideal and persona had worked seamlessly with the character of rebellion and anti-heroism, as seen in *Cool Hand Luke*. Finding the advantage in the famous star persona among the hippie and young fans during the 1960s, Warner Bros. cultivated the popular identity in the film’s marketing promotions in order to attract its target audiences. Also, the studio, in association with the press, explored Newman’s private zone to underscore the branded narrative of Newman as a real and fictional “anti-star” of the decade as appeared in the printed articles and published pieces. Newman, therefore, represented the approach of star image revision with the rebellion persona to impress the new U.S. audience base in the 1960s.

Conclusion

The three selected Warner Bros. films, which were produced during the shift of New Hollywood, demonstrated the studio’s promotion with the stardom revision as the primary approach of film salability. Based on the classical Hollywood concept of the studio branded

¹¹⁶ Becker, “Paul Newman,” 26.

¹¹⁷ See Becker, “Paul Newman,” 26 and 28. Becker marks that when Newman’s roles were aligned with his established star persona as a mainstream rebel, the star always found his biggest box office successes. On the other hand; the films which departed from his intense rebel image usually resulted in financial failure after their release.

¹¹⁸ Monaco, *The Sixties*, 142.

image, Warner Bros. further applied and revised the star-driven formula into the films' marketing strategies to produce new star personae for the new viewers of the countercultural era. Warner Bros. was not only following the changing situation and perception within the American countercultural society but also using the commercial benefit of the featured stars' classical quality and private life for the beneficial star persona. The films represented the well-thought strategies to redefine Hollywood stardom at the beginning of New Hollywood, seen as a figure of opposite attraction, romanticized glamour, and nonconformist rebellion in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Bonnie and Clyde*, and *Cool Hand Luke* respectively. This thesis serves as a well-researched study to show the imperative economic status of the New Hollywood star system, which contributed to the successful performance of the film products from the development and production phases to the final step of distribution and advertisement.¹¹⁹ It extensively supports the current New Hollywood scholarship, led by Thomas Schatz and Geoff King, to add the industrial aspect of stardom into the scholarly debate. Also, it arguably questions the domination of the emergence of the new directorial generation and the unconventional filmmaking style as the only significant features of the decade, as previously posed by Biskind and Langford. The importance of the New Hollywood star system is, therefore, more tremendously apparent in the American cinema industry.

Following the focal period within my research, the momentum of the Hollywood star system in the post-classical era was continuously maintained. After Warren Beatty and Paul Newman, there was a successive group of unconventional character type actors who entered the business to reshape the standard of the Hollywood stardom myth, such as Dustin Hoffman, Gene

¹¹⁹ Balio, "Selling Stars," 209.

Hackman, Jack Nicholson, and Jane Fonda.¹²⁰ When the new types of stars entered the business in the age of one-off production environment, as Geoff King suggests, they became “the most consistently reliable indicators of box-office potential.”¹²¹ The star component demonstrated the mass appeal, which was long-lasting and globally apparent in both domestic and international film markets. The star-driven marketing practice has been adopted by several commercial cross-over campaigns within the relevant entertainment areas, such as television, music, and theaters. Hollywood stars even asserted cultural competence and initiated political and social negotiations to control the public behaviors and mentalities, such as a performance as “a vehicle around which a range of cultural meanings condense, coalesce or compete.”¹²²

This thesis, therefore, intends to argue for a more nuanced understanding of the importance of Hollywood stardom in the inceptive era of New Hollywood, which tends to be overshadowed by privileged directors and filmmaking styles. New Hollywood stars make a considerable shift in consuming and perceiving the contemporary American stardom’s features and personae in connection with the stars’ matters and the critical themes of the period. The archival findings from the producing studio, Warner Bros., and other archival centers throughout the greater Los Angeles area provide persuasive evidence that illuminates how New Hollywood never abandoned the commercial importance of Hollywood star system to determine the profit of the contemporary films. My findings complicate the current scholarship on Hollywood stardom and New Hollywood critical studies, which usually overlooks the role that stardom played in the crystallization of New Hollywood. This research is a starting point, and there remains more to

¹²⁰ Ray, *A Certain Tendency*, 260.

¹²¹ King, *New Hollywood Cinema*, 159.

¹²² King, *New Hollywood Cinema*, 173.

uncover regarding the subtle importance of the New Hollywood stardom as one of the historical milestones in American cinema during the second half of the 20th century.

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